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tion of God—so far as these terms can have meaning, and so far as they express Christ's work—consist (1) in winning men to repentance, to sharing God's hatred of their sin; (2) in helping men to real power against sin; and (3) in the assurance of perfecting righteousness which is contained in the relation to God honestly accepted by men (p. 159).

The last and most elaborate chapter of the book deals with the influence of the deepening sense of the value and sacredness of the person upon theology. The significance of man's free, ethical, personal life, the meaning of Christ's person as the supreme interpretation of God, and the contents of the personality of God for religious thought, are the keynotes. The author finds the divine meaning and value of Christ, not in the vague, colorless categories of substance and nature, but in that perfect character which we can "transfer feature by feature to God with complete satisfaction." Dr. King would solve the problem regarding the eternally active love of God by the supposition of "eternal creation," that is, an "eternal creative activity of God," rather than by the theory of a trinity of eternal social relations which he regards as "plain Tritheism." The author frankly avows his acceptance of the "larger hope" for mankind, while granting that "the abstract possibility of endless resistance to God by men cannot be denied."

We have thus aimed to give the reader a sketch of the contents of Professor King's book and to bring into special relief its characteristic thoughts. It is the work of a man who believes that the gospel of Christ is the key to the greatest problems of our times if we will but study and understand its adaptation. It is the work of a diligent student of philosophy and of social questions—the product of a spirit as independent as it is devout. It is a "tract for the times." In a word, it is a vital book; it has the tone of reality throughout.

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THE PSALMS: FORM AND CONTENT.

In the preface to his volume¹ on the poetical forms in the Psalms Dr. Grimme says very aptly that "over night a group of exegetes has arisen, whose motto is 'biblical meter.'" Outside of this word, how-

¹*Psalmenprobleme*. Untersuchungen über Metrik, Strophik und Peseq des Psalmensbuches. Von HUBERT GRIMME. Freiburg (Schweiz): Universitätsbuchhandlung (B. Veith), 1902. viii + 204 pages. M. 7.20.

ever, there is very little agreement, as almost every investigator has developed a special theory of his own. He further remarks that until our knowledge embraces the whole circle of the metrical forms of the Semitic tongues, and we have been able from these to reconstruct the original Semitic verse, so long shall we be in the epoch of attempts which are not adapted to convince the skeptic; and from this characterization he does not exclude his own attempt contained in the volume under review.

The first section deals with the meter of the psalms and is divided into two subsections: one a survey of the rules of Hebrew meter, which is mercifully short; the second dealing with emendations founded on metrical form. There is here the same reckless handling of the text which has characterized so much recent biblical criticism. If the text does not suit the conception of the critic as to what it should be, either in sense or sound, he seems to feel himself at liberty to emend it by mere guesswork. As between the metrical guesswork and the sense guesswork, we have a slight preference for the former; but either one of them is entirely subjective, as is shown by a comparison of the text emendations made by half a dozen different writers. This volume would have been much strengthened if the writer had first given us sufficient specimens of uncorrected poetry to prove his laws, before undertaking to apply the laws to correct the poetry. This is the largest section of the work, 112 pages, or one-half of the entire book. Without making an exact count, I should say that almost all the psalms of the Psalter are represented in these emendations. This fact by itself is sufficient, in the eyes of the cautious scholar, to condemn the work as a whole. The impression made upon the mind is that Dr. Grimme has developed a theory of meter and undertaken to fit the facts to his theory. It is true that by means of the meter corrections may be made in the psalms. In fact in the Psalter the metrical form is a valuable help in text criticism which we do not possess, except in a very small degree, in any other book; but it is a help which must be used with the greatest caution, with careful study of the versions, and with the presumption always in favor of the text as it stands, and not against it. The burden of proof must lie on the corrector. This, it seems to me, is the rule of caution and of good scholarship. Space will not permit me to discuss special cases of text correction made by Dr. Grimme.

The next section deals with psalms composed in two or more different meters. On the evidence of the meter Dr. Grimme finds that

thirty-nine psalms are composite. Of these, sixteen occur in the first book, nine in the second and third, three in the fourth, and eleven in the fifth. In many cases of composite psalms, especially in the first book, however, the composition consists merely in the addition of one or two verses at the close in a meter different from that in which the rest of the psalm is composed. This peculiarity is not found in the same form in any other book, which suggests that the first book existed as a collection by itself earlier than Books II to V. Dr. Grimme further concludes that the earliest form of meter was the four-beat; next to this and partly contemporaneous with it was the five-beat, and latest in time comes the three-beat. Examining the various books according to their meter, he finds that in the first book the four- and three-beat psalms are almost equal in number. Examining the other books he finds that the number of three beats in proportion to two beats increases as one goes on, but that in the fifth book there is a very large number of five-beat psalms, almost all the psalms of Degrees being of this character. From this and other metrical features of the psalms, he concludes that the first book was the earliest collection, after which followed the second, third, and fourth in order. The fifth book contains a gleanings of many old psalms, and in the matter of age stands closest to the first book. On the whole, this section is the most interesting and the most sane in this little volume.

Lack of space will not permit me to examine more closely Dr. Grimme's theories, nor to note more than the names of his two last sections on "Psalm Strophe" and the "*Paseq-Lagarmeh* in the Psalms" respectively. In general I do not feel that the method of rash and theoretical speculation which seems to me to characterize this book is best calculated to advance the study of Hebrew meter; and, in fact, I must say that the general impression made upon me by a comparison of the different theories of Hebrew meter so far presented to the world is exceedingly disappointing.

The first three parts of Engert's little volume² constitute almost an introduction to the exegesis of the Psalter. We say "almost," because, as the author has in view especially the discussion of the meaning of "the praying righteous man," the *I* of the psalms, his field is somewhat limited. However, his conception of his subject has allowed him to include in the discussion the greater part of the psalm material.

²*Der betende Gerechte der Psalmen.* Historisch-kritische Untersuchung als Beitrag zu einer Einleitung in den Psalter. Von THADDAEUS ENGERT. Würzburg: Gobel & Scherer, 1902. 134 pages. M. 2.

In the fourth part he passes from the historical-critical review of the views of others to a presentation of his own views with regard to this "praying righteous one." While attributing the Psalter to the post-exilic period, he holds that psalms of the pre-exilic time were incorporated at least in the first book of psalms. There are, however, no means at hand to determine to what extent these psalms were revised and reshaped. The object of the collection, as it was made in post-exilic times, was to glorify the newly established service of God by fitting psalms, and to make those psalms an expression of Jewish piety at the time of this redaction, that is, in and after the exile. The psalter is "the echo of the faithful heart to the words of the prophets, to the great deeds of the Lord toward his people." It is "the echo of the promises and declarations of the Lord, expressing themselves in fervent prayers and joyful hymns of thanksgiving."

Having thus established the date, the meaning, and the purpose of the psalms in general, he next discusses the religious ideas of the psalter. The one idea which rules and inspires all prophecy, that is, the Messianic hope, must find its most vivid expression in the Psalter; and, in fact, he finds that this hope gives to the psalms their characteristic impression. Israel is itself the Messiah; as such it has a rightful claim to divine help against the hostile power of the world. This mighty struggle against the world-kingdom is represented in the psalms as a battle for the right, which must be decided by the righteous judge in favor of the righteous one. This righteous one is the singer of our psalms, who suffers for the sake of his God. It is not an individual Israelite as such who is the singer of our psalms, but Israel itself, as the people of the Lord, prays and sings these hymns; not, however, the people in its merely national sense, for only too often the psalmist must supplicate the help of the Lord against his own brethren and his fellow-Israelites. The servants of the Lord are the עֲבָדִים and עֲנָוִים, and the use of these terms is a proof of the origin of the psalm collections in the post-exilic times, when the condition of the returned exiles was a wretched one, the rich and prosperous Jews having remained in Babylon.

We do not understand that Dr. Engert means to say that all such psalms were composed with any such sense as this, but that in the editing and adaptation of the psalter for its use as the hymn-book of the second temple, this has come to be the meaning throughout of the apparently individual *I*. It is the ideal Israel; Israel thought of as the Messiah, which speaks out of this *I*.

We commend the book as a useful and valuable little contribution to the discussion of the significance of the use of the individual subject in the psalms. Its value is enhanced by the historical-critical discussion of Psalm-interpretation.

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GENERAL CHURCH HISTORY: PRINCIPLES AND METHODS.

PROFESSOR MONCRIEF'S book¹ aims to meet the needs particularly of two classes of readers: first, beginners in the study of church history in the theological schools; second, general, nonprofessional, readers who wish to know something of the career of the Christian church from the earliest times. The plan of the work is simple. Following the common division of the Christian era into periods, the author gives an account of the principal religious movements, notes their relation to human affairs on a broad scale, and explains the significance of outstanding events and the influence of eminent personalities.

The work is accordingly descriptive and explanatory rather than narrative. The object seems to be to enable the student not so much to remember historical events as to understand them. The effect upon the reader is that, instead of the weariness and distraction with which beginners are often troubled on account of the way in which some church historians heap together events, important or insignificant, with no distinct guiding principle, or make digressions which unwind into long and wearisome dissertations, he begins to perceive that the bewildering maze has a meaning and a thrilling interest, because it exhibits the working of great principles which stand in the closest relation to problems of our own time.

The author also takes good care to guard the beginner against the danger of being satisfied with the general knowledge which a short history supplies. Carefully prepared bibliographies, with occasional comments on the character of works named, remind the student of the extent of the field and direct him how to explore it.

Such a book meets a real need, not only of the classes mentioned, but of teachers in ordinary theological seminaries. The method of teaching church history by making students "get up" a text-book containing the necessary information is very unsatisfactory as to imme-

¹ *A Short History of the Christian Church*. By JOHN W. MONCRIEF. Chicago: Revell, 1902. 456 pp. \$1.50.